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Stuart, Henry Harvey

Socialism: its principles
and progress

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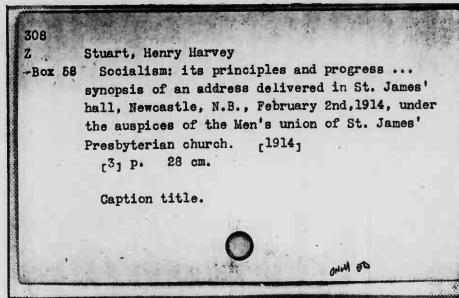
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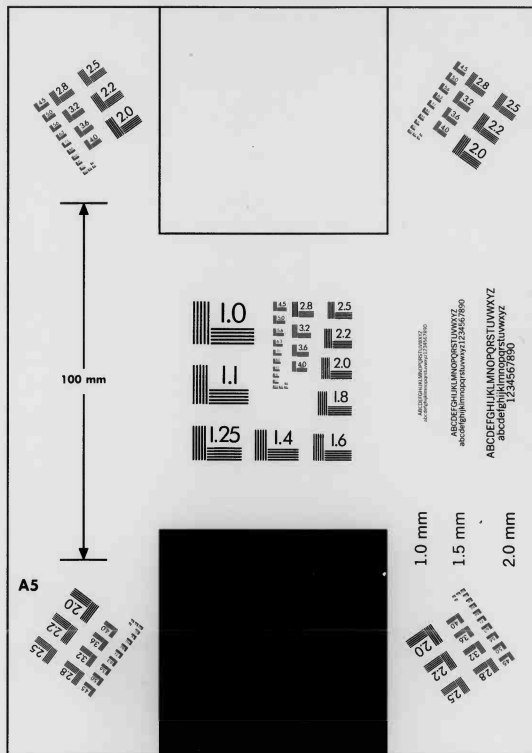
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SOCIALISM: ITS
PROGRESS +
PRINCIPLES



Socialism: Its Principles and Progress

BY HENRY HARVEY STUART

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Synopsis of an Address Delivered in St. James' Hall, Newcastle, N. B.,
February 2nd, 1914, under the Auspices of the Men's
Union of St. James' Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—As the doctrines of Socialism, so well understood and largely accepted in many parts of the world, are not so familiar in every part of Eastern Canada, it is with great pleasure that I embrace the opportunity afforded by the invitation of your Society's executive to address you on the Principles and Progress of the Socialist Party, and I hope that I may be able to lay before you a correct and intelligible view of the great International Socialist movement, which in recent years has so profoundly affected the minds and hearts of many millions of the voting population of the civilized world.

The universal discontent and political and industrial disturbance today shows that something is fundamentally wrong with the present system. When industrial disputes that practically amount to civil war are breaking out daily, entailing bitter class hatred and inestimable loss of life and property, it is time to be seeking a remedy. For this unsettled and ruinous state of affairs Socialists claim that they, and they alone, of all political parties, have the remedy, which remedy I shall attempt to describe to you to-night.

There is much misapprehension in many minds, of the true nature of Socialism. Some still believe that Socialism is a purely communistic theory, and not even one of voluntary communism like that of the early Christian church but universal and compulsory, so that the lazier would, without having to work for himself, receive a share of the property of his industrious neighbors. Such an idea

is very far from the truth. On the contrary, Socialists the world over insist that, after due provision has been made for popular education and the support of the helpless young and aged and the physically and mentally incapacitated, each worker shall receive the full net value of his labor, that everyone who can work must work or starve, that is, as the Bible says, "He that will not work neither shall he eat." The charge that Socialism means a compulsory and equal "dividing up" of property regardless of the rights acquired by the honest toil of industrious citizens, giving the loafer an equal share with the worker, is as untrue as it is absurd. He who claims that Socialism is a mere dividing up scheme must be totally unacquainted with Socialist philosophy, Socialist platforms, and the fact that in the most highly civilized and enlightened states of central and northwestern Europe—that part of the continent exclusive of Spain, Portugal, Russia, Hungary and Roumania—the Socialist number 10,000,000, the general rule being the more educated the nation the higher the percentage of its electors who are Socialists.

There is too much dividing up going on at the present time. The public lands of Canada have been largely divided up between railway companies and land speculators instead of being kept for actual settlers alone. The gold bearing lands of Yukon were divided up between mining companies who have to pay a ridiculously small royalty instead of being worked by the public in order that the whole

of the output, less the cost of mining and smelting, might have gone into the national treasury to build the transcontinental railway or other public works. The coal areas of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia have been divided up among a few companies, who, upon payment of a small sum per ton raised, pocket a vast profit which should go into the provincial or national treasuries. So, also, with the iron ore of New Brunswick. It has been divided up among a few speculators, one company getting a lease of the most valuable mines for eighty years at a royalty of only five cents a ton! The lumber on New Brunswick's crown lands, which under a Socialist system would be cut, driven, manufactured and sold by the public, has been divided up among corporations, largely foreign, who, on payment of a certain stampage, are under no obligations as to whom they shall employ or what wages they shall pay, or what they shall charge for their product.

Because the machinery of the world is divided up among a few the many must work for a mere pittance while the profits of industry are divided up among the stockholders, many of whom do nothing of use to the community, but merely collect dividends from the labor of others.

Socialism aims to stop such dividing up. To do so, it proposes to abolish the capitalist system, under which the Capitalist class own all the land and machinery and the landless, toolless Proletarian has to make his living by working for the Capitalist on whatever terms the latter chooses to dictate. Socialist would

have all the necessary work of the world done co-operatively, the individual employer being entirely eliminated.

Socialism is not Confucianism by the name of the property that rightfully belongs to the few. It rather means RESTORATION TO THE PUBLIC of all that of which the people, through force or fraud, have been unjustly deprived. No man who has given full value for everything he possesses need fear a Socialist victory. And, in restoring to public ownership any land or franchise that should never have been alienated therefrom, the dispossessed occupant should certainly, and doubtless will, receive from a Socialist administration the full value of what he put in OF HIS OWN into the property expropriated—no mere, no less.

To many of the uninformed Socialist means anarchy, rebellion, mere discontent. But the word Socialism is derived from the Latin word "Socius" (a partner) and signifies industrial and political partnership, or co-operation, on the largest possible scale. Those of us who are striving to bring about the Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth believe that individual private ownership and management of the necessities of life, and the consequent wage system, should be replaced as soon as possible, by a system of Public Collective Ownership, control and operation of all the means of production, and exchange so that every useful citizen shall be assured not of a part as now but the FULL VALUE OF WHAT HE CREATES.* We would have everything necessary to the welfare of the people in general administered directly by the direct representatives of the people. The product of the useful labor of each man's hand or brain would belong to him exclusively, to be used as he should see fit.

That Socialism is not identical, nor affiliated, with Anarchy is shown by the fact that no delegate known to be an Anarchist has been admitted to any International Socialist Congress that held in Brussels in 1911. Many good people consider Socialism inimical to Christianity, but such is far from being the case. On the contrary, Socialism is the teaching of true Christianity applied to industrial, social and political life. As is most truly stated in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "THE ETHICS OF SOCIALISM

IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF CHRISTIANITY. The Christian ideal is a life of service. So is the Socialist. Under present conditions of universal competition the Golden Rule of the Christ cannot be followed. Every man's hand is now against his neighbors. If competition is the life of trade it has proved the death of the majority of the traders, for sooner or later, as our newspapers are continually showing us in their news columns, the greater number of small business men go to the wall, unable to stand the competition of their better equipped or less scrupulous rivals. One cannot work to extend his business at the expense of his neighbor and yet love that neighbor as he loves himself.

The Capitalist Competitive System entails much useless labor and therefore much waste. Farmers would gain immensely by taking down their fences and working co-operatively and buying and selling in large quantities. The many small merchants and manufacturers in villages and towns who now merely exist would, as well as their customers, gain immensely by a co-operative system. The labor saved by manufacturing and distributing on a large scale and by co-operative farming could clear more land, dig more coal, save more lumber, construct more houses—make the country much richer than it is. So in other walks of life.

Under Socialism every citizen would be a shareholder in the Trusts would have permanent employment and would receive the full worth of his work, the full value of INTEREST, RENT, AND PROFIT BEING ABOLISHED. The Socialists would not smash the Trusts but merely nationalize them. Under private ownership every new machine throws people out of employment or tends to reduce wages; but under Public Ownership of industry every new machine, every saving of wear and tear, every increase in productive power, would benefit all alike. Let the nation own all the machinery of production, properly rewarding inventors, and operate it in the public interest. This change will be made as the majority shall then decide. Socialists have no cut-and-dried theory of just how the change from private to public ownership will be effected. What property has to be restored to the public can

be expropriated under the law of Eminent Domain common to, and frequently enforced by, all nations.

The Socialist Platform
Socialists, according to the platform of the Socialist Party of Canada, aim to secure possession of the power of government by POLITICAL ACTION, to overthrow the capitalist system and set up and enforce the economic program of the working class, as follows:

"1. The transformation, as rapidly as possible, of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (national resources, factories, mills, railroads, etc.) into the collective property of the working class.

"2. The democratic organization and management of industry BY THE WORKERS.

"3. The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use instead of production for profit."

Socialism stands for universal co-operation instead of competition, for universal peace, for the abolition of poverty, and for the absolute equality, so far as opportunity is concerned, of all mankind without reference to sex, color, language or religion. It alone of all political parties stands for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. It is the most sincere attempt to apply the basic principles of Christianity to the industrial and political life of the nation, and therefore deserves the support of all genuine Christians.

The Cause of Hard Times

"Hard Times" are caused by "actors being compelled to shut down every few years because the workers have produced more goods than with their small wages, they can buy back. Until the surplus can be sold in foreign markets or used up somehow by the few capitalists who own it, production has to cease and the workers go hungry and naked in the midst of plenty—a bitter result of our boasted civilization! Such a system tends to weed out the middle class and leave but two classes—on the one hand, a few millionaires; on the other, millions of workers with wages so low as to place the great majority of them always in the shadow of starvation. Let the Socialist revolution raise an unceasing protest and call upon every fair-minded man and woman to join with them in their endeavor to abolish it.

Jesus fed the multitudes as well as

preached to their souls. Socialism would relieve the workers of anxiety and enable them to take time to think of God and His goodness. It would not interfere with, but greatly encourage, the Christian ideal of a life of service to mankind. Only Socialists can and do love their neighbors as themselves. The competitive system finds no sanction in the Golden Rule or the Laws of Moses; but Socialism, in its emphasis of the Brotherhood of man, exhibits the cardinal virtue of Christianity.

Progress of Socialism
The Socialist political movement began to take its present form in 1848 when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels of Germany, issued the celebrated Communist Manifesto in London. In 1861, Marx began the "International Association of Workmen," which was finally launched in London on September 28th, 1864. In 1863 Ferdinand Lassalle of Breslau formed the "General Society of German Workmen" to agitate for manhood suffrage. The followers of Marx and Lassalle were united in 1875. International Congresses have been held every two to four years since 1889, and there is a permanent International Socialist secretariat at Brussels.

The first time any Socialist ever contested a parliamentary election anywhere in the world was in North Germany in 1867—only 47 years ago—when the vote was 30,000. In 1871 the German Socialist vote was 124,655, three per cent. of the total, and in 1912 it was over four millions, electing 110 of the 397 parliamentary deputies. In France the Socialists have increased from 30,000 in 1885 to over a million in 1910, and the progress has been equally marked in many other countries. The Chinese revolution in 1911 was led by Socialists, and

the Nationalist Party, whose principles were Socialist, elected the majority of the first Chinese parliament in 1913, on an educational qualification for voters and candidates. By military force, President Yuan expelled the Socialist majority late last year, but the Chinese Socialist Party, with its 200,000 pledged members, 60,000 of whom are women, will be heard from again.

The Russian parliament of 1907 was at least 22 or, as some say, 36 per cent. Socialist, and the Czar in fear dissolved it and shut out the common people from voting for the next. Yet there are Socialist voters and deputies even in Russia.

In Belgium one-third of the people are Socialists, although because of the plural votes allowed the middle and upper classes, the Socialists cast, as yet, cast but one-fourth of the ballots.

The most Socialistic part of the British Empire is Australia, where forty per cent. of the total vote was cast for Socialist referenda in 1915, and almost fifty per cent. in 1913. In Britain the Labor Party (in affiliation with the Socialist Congress) has 42 members in parliament. In Canada the Socialists have two members in the British Columbia legislature, hundreds of local organizations, two weekly newspapers, the Western Clarion, of Vancouver, and the Cotton Weekly, of Cowansville, P. Q.) and in 1913 their vote had risen to 17,071. In the United States, the Socialist vote more than doubled from 1908 to 1912. In Brazil, Cuba, Turkey, Persia, Japan, India and other countries the Party has established itself, and bids fair to soon cover the world.

Election Figures
The following table gives the approximate Socialist vote of the world

to date (those for China being the only important figures that are not available):

	Soc.	P. C.	Dep.
	Vote	Total	Elect'd
China (1913)			MaJy.
Australia (1915)	750,000*	48	37
Finland	368,000	45	90
Germany (1912)	4,250,229	34	110
Belgium (1912)	600,000	25	39
Sweden (1911)	172,780	23.5	64
Denmark (1910)	98,721	25	24
Austria (1911)	1,100,000	22	82
Italy (1913)	882,000	20	85
Holland (1910)	82,494	7	
Holland (1913)	150,000*	18	
Bulgaria (1913)	100,000*		
Switzerland (1911)	125,000*	15	
France (1910)	1,106,000	11	74
Russia	800,000	12	
G. Britain (1911)	350,000	6	41
U. States (1912)	500,000	5	0
Spain	40,791	1	
Servia	25,000	2	
Greece (1912)	15,000	1	
Luxembourg	6,100	7	
Roumania	2,507	0	
New Zealand	18,884	5	4
So. Africa (1910-12)	11,000	6	
Chili	25,000*	5	
Argentina	18,000	3	
Uruguay		1	
Portugal		1	
Persia		1	

Totals—over 11,262,183.

* Estimated.

In 1907, the number of Socialists in the world, excluding Russia and China, was 8,000,000; in 1915, over 11,000,000. Thus the movement grows.

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